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Borders in Play Culture Quilts

Borders in Play

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Samuel Canseco Culture Quilt

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Samuel Canseco

Born: Oceanside, CA

SPAN 380

Male (he, him, his)

Mexican- American

Cultural Quilt Questions

What's the most important thing you've gained or learned from your parents growing up? + Moment that has impacted you and changed you .

The most important thing that I've learned from my parents came from my childhood nightmare. Ever since I was a little kid, I've had to work as a landscaper with my father. I would wake up at 7 am during the summer to work until 4pm In the hot sun. I hated working in the hot summer sun knowing that everyone else from school was at home sitting in front of a TV with the A/C on, so I never understood why I had to work with my father. I simply believed it was because he wanted to torture me. I finally confronted him and asked him why he always had to bring me to work. My father sat down and told me that I would find out once I was older and thank him for it. As years went on I continued to work without knowing why, but I now realize that the reason my father brought me to work was so that I could realize that nothing in life is easy. I had to work hard in school, so that I didn't have to work in the hot sun like my father. My father would always tell me that this "torture" I was constantly feeling is a struggle that he faces on a daily basis to put food on our table. I also learned that anything is possible, because my mom studies until 3rd grade and my dad studied until 6th. They showed me the value

of working hard and not giving up. They are the reason why I was motivated to study and get good grades in High School. Everything that I do is for my parents, and I want to study in order for them to have a better life than they did growing up. Despite the fact that my parents work hard under the sun, I have never struggled thanks to the love and support that my parents have always given me. When I was a little kid, I thought I could do any sport, so my parents would always support me with the sport I chose to play in a given month of the year. I appreciate that they always prioritized our education and showed constant support.

What's the most prominent border you have experienced in your life and how has it affected you? + One thing I wish my peers knew about me.

The most prominent border that I have experienced in my life is being a Mexican American in a predominantly white school. I never had the issue with feeling different growing up, but as soon as I went to a private middle school and high school, I felt completely different due to financial and racial differences. I was the only Hispanic in my graduating class, so I was always looked at or called out when something that had to do with Mexico was brought up. The worst was when the teacher would ask what our parents did for a living and everyone would proceed to say things like: lawyer, architect, financial advisor, etc. I would stay quiet and be ashamed at the fact that my dad was a landscaper and my mom cleaned houses. I was ashamed to be picked up in a gardening truck everyday, and now I'm ashamed of myself for being ashamed. I now realize who I am and how lucky I am to have parents like the ones I do. I would like my peers to know

that I have changed so much as a person and I went from someone that was ashamed of being Mexican to falling in love with the culture.

What language or languages do you speak and in what context? (Or maybe, what is your ethnicity?)

I speak Spanish at home and with my family. I am Mexican- American and I love the fact that I have so many cultures I can partake in. Spanish is my first language, and I learned English from hanging out with other kids that spoke the language in elementary school.

What values or characteristics are most important to you?

What I value the most is my family and music. As Mentioned before, I love my parents so much and do absolutely everything for them. As long as they are happy, I have nothing to complain about. Music has been a huge part of my life and it evolved with me. I used to hate being a Mexican American and would constantly be ashamed of listening to Spanish music or anything that had to do with my culture. As I learned to appreciate who I was, I started to expand my knowledge on music. I fell in love with Regional Mexican Music,

and decided to join a band as a vocalist. Before I came to college I used to be a vocalist for a regional Mexican band and am now in love with my culture and who I am.